IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA LYNCHBURG DIVISION

SHANTA LYNETTE BROWN, et al.,

Plaintiffs,

Case No. 6:23cv00054 v.

THE CITY OF LYNCHBURG, et al.,

Defendants.

DEPOSITION OF AQUASHA SANDIDGE

October 25, 2024

10:25 a.m. - 10:47 a.m.

Lynchburg, Virginia

REPORTED BY: Kimberly A. Henderson, RPR

1		
1		Deposition of AQUASHA SANDIDGE, taken and
2	trans	scribed on behalf of the Defendants, pursuant
3	to no	otice and/or agreement to take depositions; by
4	and k	pefore Kimberly A. Henderson, a Registered
5	Profe	essional Reporter and Notary Public in and for
6	the C	Commonwealth of Virginia at Large; commencing
7	at 10):25 a.m., October 25, 2024, at the offices of
8	the I	Synchburg City Attorney, 900 Church Street,
9	Lynch	nburg, Virginia.
10	APPE <i>P</i>	ARANCES OF COUNSEL:
11		
12		JAMES RIVER LEGAL ASSOCIATES 7601 Timberlake Road
13		Lynchburg, Virginia 24502 434.845.4529
14		kthomas@vbclegal.com PAUL VALOIS, ESQUIRE
15	ы.	Counsel for the Plaintiffs
16		GUYNN, WADDELL, CARROLL & LOCKABY, P.C. 415 S. College Avenue
17		Salem, Virginia 24153 540.387.2320
18		jimg@guynnwaddell.com john@guynnwaddell.com
19	BY:	JIM H. GUYNN, JR., ESQUIRE
20		JOHN R. FITZGERALD, ESQUIRE Counsel for the Defendants
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

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(10:25 a.m., October 25, 2024) 1 2 3 AOUASHA SANDIDGE 4 was sworn and testified as follows: 5 EXAMINATION BY MR. GUYNN: 6 7 Q. Good morning. 8 Α. Good morning. 9 My name is Jim Guynn. I represent Ο. the defendants in the lawsuit that you brought, and 10 as I'm sure Mr. Valois has told you, I'm going to 11 12 be asking you some questions this morning. 13 don't understand my question, or if you don't hear 14 it, just tell me, and I'll be glad to either repeat 15 it or clarify it. But if you do answer the 16 question, I'm going to assume that you both heard 17 it and understood it. Okay? 18 Α. Okay. 19 The other thing I would ask you to do Q. 20 is speak up so the court reporter can hear you, so 2.1 she can get a good transcript. And I'll try not to 22 start my next question until you finish your 23 answer. And if you can wait and start your answer 24 until I finish the question, it will help her on 25 the transcript.

1		The last thing would be try and
2	answer with a w	word as opposed to uh-huh or huh-uh,
3	because she car	n't spell uh-huh or huh-uh, and it
4	won't show up w	well in the transcript. Okay?
5	Α.	Yeah.
6	Q.	My understanding is your name is
7	Aquasha Sandid	ge?
8	Α.	Yes.
9	Q.	Okay. How old are you?
10	Α.	23.
11	Q.	Where do you live?
12	Α.	I live at 6105 Old Mill Road.
13	Q.	Are you married?
14	Α.	No.
15	Q.	Who do you live there with at 6105
16	Old Mill Road?	
17	Α.	Just me and my children, my three
18	kids.	
19	Q.	You have three kids?
20	A.	I do.
21	Q.	How old are they?
22	Α.	Four, two, and one.
23	Q.	Does the four-year-old go to school,
24	like at a pre-	kindergarten?
25	Α.	Yes.

1	Q. What school?
2	A. It's called Head Start.
3	Q. And what's your educational
4	background? Did you finish high school?
5	A. I did not.
6	Q. We're here, as you know,
7	Ms. Sandidge, about an incident that occurred in
8	April of 2020 with the police.
9	Do you remember that?
10	A. Yes.
11	Q. Okay. And if I said it occurred on
12	April 28th, 2020, does that sound about right?
13	A. Yes.
14	Q. So tell me when you first became
15	aware, or how you first became aware, that the
16	police were there?
17	A. I looked out the window. It was
18	nighttime, and I was eating, and I walked over to
19	the window and seen
20	Q. And saw the lights?
21	A. Yeah, uh-huh.
22	Q. Who else did you see?
23	A. Just my brother was in the truck.
24	Q. Was it a truck or a car?
25	A. I think it was a truck. I'm not

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I think it was a truck. 1 Don't recall? 2 Ο. 3 Α. Right, I don't. 4 Q. And this was at your mother's house, 5 your mother's apartment? Α. Yes, uh-huh. 6 7 Q. So what did you do? Did you go outside? 8 9 Α. Yes. Me and my mother, we went 10 outside. 11 And when you got out there, what was Q. going on? 12 13 He was being questioned, I do I don't recall everything. I don't 14 believe. 15 remember a lot from that night. 16 Ο. Police officers were talking to your brother? 17 18 Α. Yes. I think it was just one there 19 at the moment. I'm not sure. 20 Have you had an opportunity to look Q. 2.1 at any video of this incident since then, before 2.2 now? 23 Α. I think I've seen one. 24 Q. Did you take any video of the incident? 25

1	A. I did.
2	Q. And where is that video? Is it
3	stored somewhere, on like a phone or a
4	A. I think my mom has it. Right?
5	MR. VALOIS: Is it the one on that
6	tablet? I don't want to interrupt. I can help
7	clarify it. Is it the one on that dead tablet
8	thing?
9	THE WITNESS: She said she has mine.
10	MR. VALOIS: Yeah, I think, I think
11	that's the same one. I don't I do not
12	personally vouch for any particular video, but I
13	think that's what we're talking about.
14	BY MR. GUYNN:
15	Q. Did it appear that how was the
16	conversation going between the police officer and
17	your brother?
18	A. I honestly don't recall that.
19	Q. Were they yelling at each other?
20	A. No, not at the time, no.
21	Q. Okay. Did they ever yell at each
22	other?
23	A. No. I just, I remember the I
24	think it was Officer Grooms, I think, the woman, it
25	was the woman. So, no, there was no yelling.

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1	Q. Did you see them take your brother
2	out of the car?
3	A. Yes, yes, I think so. Yeah, I did.
4	Q. So from a perspective standpoint, if
5	that's sort of the door to your mother's apartment,
6	was the car straight out, was it more to the left,
7	more to the right? Or from your side that would be
8	the left or right or whatever?
9	A. I don't know.
10	Q. Do you recall where you were standing
11	with regard to the car itself?
12	A. Could I see the car, are you asking
13	me could I see it?
14	Q. No, no. Where you were standing, you
15	know, you were in front of the car; right?
16	A. Uh-huh, yeah.
17	Q. Were you to the right of it or to the
18	left of it?
19	A. I don't know. I think I was in front
20	of it, or on the side.
21	Q. Okay. So it may have been hard to
22	see them taking your brother out of the car, or
23	whatever, from where you were?
24	A. I could see, though, a little bit.
25	It was just a lot going on that night anyway; so.

1	Q. Okay. When you say "a lot going on,"
2	with this incident, or was there some other stuff
3	going on?
4	A. Just the same incident. I was
5	recording, trying to record, and then I had kind of
6	got distracted anyway when my mom had got
7	handcuffed. So I kind of turned away from what was
8	going on there, and was here, and then, you know,
9	an officer, or detective, grabbed me after that;
10	so.
11	Q. Did you stop recording?
12	A. When?
13	Q. At any time?
14	A. I think once I hit the ground,
15	because they took my phone. But I didn't stop
16	recording. I was still recording.
17	Q. Were you recording with the tablet
18	and the phone?
19	A. No, I just had my phone. I never had
20	a tablet.
21	Q. So has the video from your phone been
22	moved to the tablet?
23	A. I'm not sure.
24	Q. A few minutes ago, we were talking
25	about the video being on the tablet that your mom

1	has?	
2	Α.	Right. She told me that she brought
3	back my video,	so I don't know where it actually
4	is.	
5	Q.	So the video that you weren't, you
6	didn't take vio	deo with the tablet?
7	Α.	No.
8	Q.	Okay. So the video from your phone
9	has gotten to	the tablet in some way?
10	Α.	I do believe so. I'm not sure.
11	Q.	Right. I got you.
12		Somebody else did that?
13	Α.	Right.
14		MR. VALOIS: And if you want to bring
15	Shanta back in	and open it back up to ask her about
16	it, that might	that might be fruitful.
17		MR. GUYNN: Yeah, I might do that.
18	BY MR. GUYNN:	
19	Q.	I think I understand what you're
20	telling me.	
21	Α.	Okay.
22	Q.	You recorded it on the phone; your
23	mother said she	e brought it back, and it was on the
24	tablet?	
25	Α.	Right. That's what she told me

```
earlier, yeah.
 1
 2
              0.
                   Okay. All right. And you said you
    stopped -- well, you didn't stop recording the
 3
 4
    video when you were on the ground?
 5
              Α.
                   No.
                   Okay. When did the video stop?
              Ο.
 6
 7
    the only reason I'm asking this, I haven't seen it,
    so I don't know.
 8
 9
              Α.
                   Probably once I hit the ground,
    honestly, because, you know, it really wasn't
10
    showing anything after that.
11
12
              0.
                   Okay.
13
                   And then I think he took my phone,
              Α.
    and I was yelling, to tell him give it to my dad.
14
15
                   Had your dad come out by that point?
              0.
                   Yes. Yes, I think he tried to, but I
16
              Α.
    think they pushed him back in the door.
17
18
                    So you said that you were taken to
              Ο.
19
    the ground?
20
              Α.
                   Yes.
2.1
                   Who took you to the ground?
              Ο.
22
                    I think his name is Millers,
              Α.
23
    Detective Millers, I think. I'm not sure.
24
              0.
                   Was he in a uniform, or did he have
25
    on just street clothes?
```

1	A. I think it was different from an
2	actual, you know, police uniform.
3	Q. Again, detectives usually don't wear
4	the uniforms
5	A. Right.
6	Q so that's why I was thinking that.
7	All right.
8	Do you know why he took you to the
9	ground?
10	A. I do not. Well, because I guess I
11	wouldn't allow him to arrest me.
12	Q. How did you how did you not allow
13	him to arrest you? Was it that you wouldn't allow
14	yourself to be handcuffed?
15	A. Right. So when I turned to see why
16	my mom was being arrested, he came, I seen him
17	coming towards me and he grabbed me, and I was
18	trying to figure out why. So I didn't think, you
19	know, I was doing anything wrong by, you know,
20	trying to pull away from him, because I don't
21	understand what I did wrong. So, yeah.
22	Q. Did your mom go over to assist your
23	brother?
24	A. I think she tried to, yeah.
25	Q. What kept her from doing you said

```
she tried to, what kept her from it, or did
 1
 2
    anything?
                    Well, from what I seen, like I said,
 3
              Α.
 4
    she was being arrested, so I, when she was doing
    all that, like I said, I didn't catch everything.
 5
              Ο.
                    Okay.
 6
 7
                    So I don't really know.
                    So you didn't see -- let me ask it
 8
              O.
    this way. You and your mom came out of the
 9
10
    apartment, and there's a sidewalk, I guess, on the
11
    front?
12
              Α.
                    Yes.
13
                    And you were both standing on the
              Ο.
    sidewalk, weren't you?
14
15
              Α.
                    Yes.
16
              0.
                    And then at some point, your mom was
17
    over trying to assist your brother when she was
18
    arrested?
19
              Α.
                   Right.
20
                    But you didn't see what she did when
              Q.
    she went over there?
2.1
22
              Α.
                   No, I did not.
23
              Q.
                    Okay.
                    MR. VALOIS: Objection to leading,
24
                    If I say an objection, you still
25
    leading form.
```

1	have to answer unless I tell you not to talk.
2	THE WITNESS: Okay.
3	MR. VALOIS: You can answer. I'm
4	just putting an objection on for the paperwork.
5	Okay.
6	BY MR. GUYNN:
7	Q. So after you were arrested, what
8	happened next?
9	A. I was put into the car.
10	Q. To one of the police vehicles?
11	A. Yes.
12	Q. Were you taken somewhere?
13	A. Downtown.
14	Q. And where downtown did you go?
15	A. To the magistrate office.
16	Q. What happened at the magistrate
17	office?
18	A. They asked what happened.
19	Q. Did they ask you, or did they ask the
20	officers?
21	A. They were first. Both, I do believe,
22	yeah, it was both of us, so they were going first,
23	and then after, it was me.
24	Q. And when you say they asked you, do
25	you mean the magistrate asked?

1	Α.	Yes.
2	Q.	And what did the police officer say?
3	Α.	That I hit him, or grabbed him from
4	behind or some	thing. That was the detective that
5	stated that, as	nd then it was a police officer
6	standing with	him.
7	Q.	And did the police officer standing
8	there with him	say anything about you?
9	Α.	They were whispering, so I didn't
10	really hear any	ything. He like agreed with him, or
11	whatever they	were writing down.
12	Q.	The police officer agreed with the
13	detective?	
14	Α.	Yes.
15	Q.	Do you know which police officer it
16	was?	
17	A.	I do not.
18	Q.	Did you have a chance to talk to the
19	magistrate?	
20	Α.	I don't remember.
21	Q.	So when what happened after the
22	officers talked	d to the magistrate?
23	Α.	I don't remember that either.
24	Q.	Okay. Did you go home that day?
25	Α.	No, I didn't.

	rage in
1	MR. VALOIS: I'm going to object to
2	foundation. I think it might be helpful to
3	describe what a magistrate is. I don't think she
4	understands. When you're saying magistrate, I
5	don't know that she understands what that person
6	is.
7	Do you know what a magistrate is?
8	THE WITNESS: Talking about the
9	people downtown, where they asked you what
10	happened, right? Where you go to tell them what
11	happened?
12	MR. VALOIS: Well, the police?
13	THE WITNESS: The police?
14	MR. VALOIS: Well, I think she may be
15	conflating the police officer's questioning her at
16	the jail versus the magistrate behind the glass,
17	taking her oath and stuff.
18	THE WITNESS: No. I know what he's
19	saying.
20	MR. VALOIS: Okay. Never mind.
21	BY MR. GUYNN:
22	Q. I think we were on the same page,
23	weren't we?
24	A. Yes.
25	Q. You were, the officers went in with

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1	you, there was somebody behind the window
2	A. Right, yeah.
3	Q asked the officers questions?
4	A. Uh-huh. I even remember when I
5	giggled, because I heard him when he lied on me and
6	said that I hit him. And I think, you know,
7	because of me laughing is probably why they locked
8	me up.
9	Q. All right. Did they take you
10	straight from the magistrate's office to the jail?
11	A. Yes, I do believe so.
12	Q. Okay. And then did you have
13	any were you questioned by anybody at the jail?
14	A. No.
15	Q. Okay. When they checked you in at
16	the jail, did they ask you a bunch of questions
17	about your health and things like that?
18	A. Yes.
19	Q. And gave you a uniform to put on?
20	A. Yes.
21	Q. Did they put you in a I take it,
22	in a cell?
23	A. Yes.
24	Q. And was that a cell and like that
25	opened up to a big area with a TV in it and all

1	that?	
2	Α.	It was the holding cell.
3	Q.	Okay. So you were in the holding
4	cell in the b	eginning?
5	Α.	Yes.
6	Q.	Were you ever how long were you in
7	the jail?	
8	Α.	It was either five to seven days.
9	Q.	Did you stay in the holding cell the
10	whole	
11	Α.	Yes.
12	Q.	five or seven days?
13	Α.	I did.
14	Q.	And was that the jail just right down
15	here in Lynch	burg?
16	Α.	Yes.
17	Q.	I know it was jail, okay, but
18	otherwise, I	mean, were the people who worked in
19	the jail, did	they treat you fairly?
20	Α.	Yes.
21	Q.	Did you have any other interviews
22	with any poli	ce officers during the time that you
23	were in jail?	
24	Α.	No.
25	Q.	Once you got out of jail, you then

1	had to go to co	ourt; right?
2	Α.	Right.
3	Q.	And I don't know how long it was
4	between the two	o?
5	Α.	Me neither.
6	Q.	But did you talk to any police
7	officers betwee	en the time you got out of jail and
8	went to court?	
9	Α.	No.
10	Q.	Prior to this incident, did you know
11	any of those po	olice officers?
12	Α.	No.
13	Q.	Have you had occasion to run into
14	them since ther	1?
15	A.	No.
16	Q.	Have you had any other experiences
17	with police of	ficers that were negative?
18	A.	No.
19	Q.	When they put you on the ground, did
20	you suffer any	injuries?
21	Α.	No.
22	Q.	Have you sought any medical treatment
23	as a result of	this incident?
24	Α.	No.
25	Q.	Are you currently employed?

1	А	•	No.
2	Q		Were you employed at the time of this
3	incident?		
4	А	•	No.
5	Q	•	Did I ask you if you're married?
6	А	•	Yes, you did.
7	Q	•	Okay. You live at Old Mill Road with
8	your three l	kids	?
9	А	•	Yes.
10	Q	•	Their father or
11	А	•	Alone.
12	Q		alone?
13	А	•	Myself.
14	Q	•	Just the three, the four of y'all?
15	I'm sorry.		
16	А	•	Yes.
17	Q	•	Did you know whose car your brother
18	was driving	, or	truck, as you recall it?
19	А	•	No.
20			MR. GUYNN: I don't have any other
21	questions.		
22			EXAMINATION
23	BY MR. VALO	IS:	
24	Q		Aquasha, I got to ask you a couple
25	questions.	All	right.

1	When they took you to jail, you said
2	you were in jail five to seven day?
3	A. Uh-huh.
4	Q. You were in solitary?
5	A. What is that?
6	Q. Were you in a room by yourself the
7	whole time?
8	A. Yeah, I was in a room by myself.
9	Q. So this would have been in the intake
10	department?
11	A. Yeah. The holding cell.
12	Q. Well, is it in the basement in the
13	intake department? Do you know?
14	A. In the basement?
15	Q. You wouldn't know, would you? Yeah.
16	Because you can't tell from inside. Let me
17	rephrase.
18	Was there a room with a big counter
19	in the middle where the jailer sat, where the
20	correctional officer sat?
21	A. I want to say yes. I don't really
22	remember what it looked like.
23	Q. But you were in a room by yourself?
24	A. Yes.
25	Q. Did you get to watch TV?

1	A.	No. There was no TV.
2	Q.	Did you get books?
3	Α.	No.
4	Q.	Did you spend 24 hours 7 in the same
5	cell?	
6	Α.	Yes.
7	Q.	Right. By yourself?
8	A.	Yeah.
9	Q.	Were you strip searched?
10	Α.	Strip searched?
11	Q.	Did they were you forced to get
12	naked and get	searched before they
13	Α.	Yes.
14	Q.	You had to go through that?
15	Α.	Uh-huh.
16	Q.	All right. Did you enjoy that?
17	A.	No.
18	Q.	No? Was it humiliating?
19	A.	Yeah.
20	Q.	All right. And when you got out, you
21	were on bond?	
22	Α.	Yes.
23	Q.	And did you were you living with
24	your mom then	still?
25	Α.	Yes.

1	Q.	And were you allowed to travel freely
2	while you were	on bond?
3	A.	No.
4	Q.	All right. And that just got
5	resolved when,	last year; right? Your case got
6	resolved last	year; is that right?
7	A.	Yes.
8	Q.	You had a different attorney. I
9	wasn't represer	nting you in your case; correct?
10	Α.	Yes.
11	Q.	Do you remember your attorney's name?
12	Α.	I do not.
13	Q.	But your charges were ultimately
14	dismissed; righ	nt?
15	Α.	Yes.
16		MR. VALOIS: All right. I don't have
17	any further que	estions.
18		MR. GUYNN: Do you want to read?
19		MR. VALOIS: Yeah. Might as well.
20	(Re	eading and signature reserved.)
21	(Depo	osition concluded at 10:47 a.m.)
22		****
23		
24		
25		

EXHIBIT 7

1	COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA AT LARGE, to wit:
2	I, KIMBERLY A. HENDERSON, a
3	Registered Professional Reporter and Electronic
4	Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of
5	Virginia at Large, Notary Registration Number
6	359658, whose commission expires November 30, 2025,
7	do certify that the aforementioned appeared before
8	me, was sworn by me, and was thereupon examined by
9	counsel; and that the foregoing is a true, correct,
10	and full transcript of the testimony adduced to the
11	best of my ability.
12	I further certify that I am neither
13	related to nor associated with any counsel or party
14	to this proceeding, nor otherwise interested in the
15	event thereof.
16	Given under my hand and Notarial seal
17	at Forest, Virginia, this 8th day of November,
18	2024.
19	
20	
21	Neimbas a. Heenen
22	y courage out // course
23	Kimberly A. Henderson, Notary Public
24	Commonwealth of Virginia at Large
25	

1	СНА	NGES REQUES	STED TO THE	DEPOSI	ITION OF	7:
2		AQUAS	SHA SANDIDG	E		
3		TAKEN ON:	October 25	, 2024		
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23	My COMMITSSION	exbires				
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25	Notary Public			(AFFIX	NOTARY	SEAL)

A ability 25:11 actual 13:2	14:17 associated 25:13	9:15, 9:22, 15:9	20:1, 20:8	employed 20:25
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